(b) to (d) A Centrally Sponsored Scheme Integrated Cereals Development Programme in Rice Based Cropping System Areas (ICDP-Rice) is in operation under Macro Management Programme through which assistance for critical inputs for wheat like seed, farm implements, moisture saving devices, demonstrations and training is provided to farmers including the tribal farmers to promote wheat cultivation in the State.

Pesticides Regulatory System

1579. SHRI EKANATH K.THAKUR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is losing agricultural production worth Rs. 1.48 lakh crores annually due to damage from pests, weeds and plant diseases;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the current pesticides regulatory system had failed to check manufacturing, distribution and use of spurious and sub-standard pesticides, to the detriment of both the pesticides industry and the farmers; and

(c) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to reduce the loss of agricultural production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. There are crop losses due to damage from pests, weeds and plant diseases, but Government of India through its various schemes take steps to contain these losses. However, there are estimates which indicate crop losses ranging from 10 to 30% of total crop production. The extent of crop losses depends upon various factors such as weather conditions, crop cultural practices etc.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Insecticides Act, 1968, regulates import, manufacture, sale, transport and distribution of insecticides to prevent risk to human being and animals. Appropriate penal action is taken by the States, from time to time, against manufacturers of spurious products, under various provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968. Government of India is taking a number of steps to contain crop losses due to different pests and diseases. Under the scheme Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in the Country (SMPMA), the concept of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which is an eco-friendly approach to pest management, is propagated. Funds are provided to the State Governments for establishing and strengthening Bio Control and State Pesticides Testing Laboratories. 31 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) have been set up in various states, under the control of Directorate of Plant Protection Quarantine and Storage, Faridabad, to popularize IPM by training farmers in the field through Farmers Field Schools. CIPMC's also take up pest surveillance based on which advisories are issued to farmers for Management of pests and diseases.

Dependency on Agriculture

1580. SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the World Development Report, which says that three out of four people live in rural areas and 2.1 billion live on less than a dollar a day;

(b) whether Government is also aware that most of these people depends on agriculture;

(c) if so, whether Government will propose to make agriculture more remunerative and employment oriented to achieve millennium development goals; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) According to World Development Report, 2008, persistent concentration of poverty in rural areas in the transforming developing countries can be addressed by increasing agricultural productivity and generating rural non-farm employment. To sustain and revitalize agriculture sector, Government of India have taken several steps. These steps, *inter-alia* include launching of two new schemes namely, National Food Security Mission to improve production and productivity of foodgrains and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana to achieve 4% annual growth in agriculture sector during XI Plan; credit policy to increase flow of institutional credit to agriculture sector and provision of crop loan upto Rs. 3.00 lakhs to farmers at reduced interest of 7% per annum. Besides, a number of initiatives plan schemes and programmes, including initiatives announced in the Budget 2008-09 have been taken/ initiated for development of agriculture sector.

Scientific method for agriculture

1581. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National Agriculture Innovation Project aims at utilizing science for agricultural economy orientation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) as the agricultural land is shrinking, due to industrialization and developments, what is the role of this project in increasing crop in less land to keep India self-sufficient in food production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The overall objective of the National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) is to utilize science to facilitate accelerated and sustainable transformation of Indian agriculture in support of poverty alleviation and income generation.

The project contributes to research on production to consumption system, to demonstrate how rural income and employment generation could be enhanced through post-harvest processing, value addition and export promotion.The project will also support research on sustainable rural livelihood security in some of the 150 most backward districts of the country identified by the Planning Commission. The emphasis here will be on on-farm research for improving and developing the most suitable farming system and allied farm activities in the less favorable environment, region and groups so that the livelihood of the rural poor improves through assured food, nutrition, employment and income. These efforts will be further strengthened by supporting research on basic and strategic research in the priority areas.

(c) The role of National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) is to increase cropping intensity wherever possible, use best production and processing practices, link production